

SIR ROGER  
DE COVERLEY



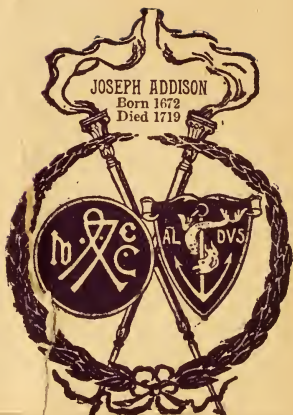
JOSEPH ADDISON

PR 3304

.D4

1900

Copy 1



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

PR 3304

Chap. .... Copyright No. ....

Shelf . II 4 . 1900

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.















# SIR ROGER *de* *Coverley.*



*Joseph  
Addison.*

11

**H. M. Caldwell Co.**  
**New York and Boston.**

Library of Congress

TWO COPIES RECEIVED

SEP 6 1900

Copyright entry

*Sept 7, 1900*

No. *A. 22222*

SECOND COPY.

Delivered to

ORDER DIVISION,

SEP 18 1900

*Copyright, 1900*

By H. M. CALDWELL Co.

69949

Sir Roger de Coverley



## Preface ❧

afterwards. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut, that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humours, he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour, that he is rather beloved than esteemed. His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess love to him, and the young men are glad of his company; when he comes into a house, he calls the servants by their names, and talks all the way up stairs to a visit. I must not omit, that Sir Roger is a justice of the *quorum*; that he fills the chair at a quarter-session with great abilities, and three months ago, gained universal applause, by explaining a passage in the game-act.



# Contents

	PAGE
Preface . . . . .	I
Sir Roger at Home . . . . .	5
Sir Roger and Will. Wimble . . . . .	15
Sir Roger at Church . . . . .	24
Sir Roger and the Witches . . . . .	33
Sir Roger at the Assizes . . . . .	43
Sir Roger and the Gipsies . . . . .	54
Sir Roger in Town . . . . .	64
Sir Roger in Westminster Abbey . . . . .	74
Sir Roger at the Play . . . . .	85
Sir Roger at Vauxhall . . . . .	96





# Sir Roger de Coverley

## CHAPTER I.

### SIR ROGER AT HOME

**H**AVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country-house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my

humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please ; dine at his own table, or in my chamber, as I think fit ; sit still, and say nothing, without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shows me at a distance. As I have been walking in the fields, I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge, and have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons ; for as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants ; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him : by this means his domestics are all in years,

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

and grown old with their master. You would take his valet de chambre for his brother ; his butler is gray-headed ; his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen ; and his coachman has the looks of a privy-councillor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog ; and in a gray pad, that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe, with a great deal of pleasure, the joy that appeared in the countenances of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master ; every one of them pressed forward to do something for

him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good nature engages everybody to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humour, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with : on the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow servants, wonderfully

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense, and some learning, of a very regular life, and obliging conversation: he heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem; so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependant.

I have observed in several of my papers that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is something of an humourist; and that his

virtues, as well as imperfections, are, as it were, tinged by a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly his, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common and ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned; and, without staying for my answer, told me that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table; for which reason, he desired a particular friend of his at the University to find him out a clergyman

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❀

rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of backgammon. My friend (says Sir Roger) found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, though he does not show it. I have given him the parsonage of the parish; and, because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and, though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for some-

thing in behalf of one or other of my tenants, his parishioners. There has not been a lawsuit in the parish since he has lived among them; if any dispute arises they apply themselves to him for the decision; if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once, or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a series that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity.

As Sir Roger was going on in his



story, the gentleman we were talking of came up to us; and upon the knight's asking him who preached to-morrow (for it was Saturday night), told us, the Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Doctor South in the afternoon. He then showed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure, Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Saunderson, Doctor Barrow, Doctor Calamy, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualification of a good aspect and a clear voice; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as

the discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example, and, instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people.

## CHAPTER II.

SIR ROGER AND WILL. WIMBLE

AS I was yesterday morning walking with Sir Roger before his house, a country fellow brought him a huge fish, which, he told him, Mr. William Wimble had caught that very morning ; and that he presented it with his service to him, and intended to come and dine with him. At the same time he delivered a letter, which my friend read to me as soon as the messenger left him.

“SIR ROGER :—I desire you to accept of a Jack, which is the best I have caught

this season. I intend to come and stay with you a week, and see how the Perch bite in the Black river. I observed with some concern, the last time I saw you upon the Bowling-green, that your whip wanted a lash to it: I will bring half a dozen with me that I twisted last week, which I hope will serve you all the time you are in the country. I have not been out of the saddle for six days last past, having been at Eaton with Sir John's eldest son. He takes to his learning hugely.

“I am, Sir, your humble Servant,

“WILL. WIMBLE.”

This extraordinary letter, and message that accompanied it, made me very curious to know the character and quality of the gentleman who sent them; which I found to be as follows. Will. Wimble is younger brother to a baronet, and descended

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

of the ancient family of the Wimbles. He is now between forty and fifty; but being bred to no business, and born to no estate, he generally lives with his elder brother as superintendent of his game. He hunts a pack of dogs better than any man in the country, and is very famous for finding out a hare. He is extremely well versed in all the little handicrafts of an idle man: he makes a May-fly to a miracle; and furnishes the whole country with angle-rods. As he is a good-natured, officious fellow, and very much esteemed upon account of his family, he is a welcome guest at every house, and keeps up a good correspondence among all the gentlemen about him. He carries a tulip-root in his pocket from one to another,

or exchanges a puppy between a couple of friends that live perhaps in the opposite sides of the county. Will. is a particular favourite of all the young heirs, whom he frequently obliges with a net that he has weaved, or a setting-dog that he has *made* himself; he now and then presents a pair of garters of his own knitting to their mothers or sisters; and raises a great deal of mirth among them, by inquiring, as often as he meets them, “how they wear?” These gentleman-like manufactures and obliging little humours make Will. the darling of the country.

Sir Roger was proceeding in the character of him, when he saw him make up to us with two or three hazel-twigs in his hand, that he had

cut in Sir Roger's woods, as he came through them in his way to the house. I was very much pleased to observe on one side the hearty and sincere welcome with which Sir Roger received him, and, on the other, the secret joy which his guest discovered at sight of the good old knight. After the first salutes were over, Will. desired Sir Roger to lend him one of his servants to carry a set of shuttlecocks, he had with him in a little box, to a lady that lived about a mile off, to whom it seems he had promised such a present for above this half-year. Sir Roger's back was no sooner turned, but honest Will. began to tell me of a large cock pheasant that he had sprung in one of the neighbouring woods, with two or three other adventures of the same

nature. Odd and uncommon characters are the game that I look for, and most delight in; for which reason I was as much pleased with the novelty of the person that talked to me, as he could be for his life with the springing of a pheasant, and therefore listened to him with more than ordinary attention.

In the midst of his discourse the bell rung to dinner, where the gentleman I have been speaking of had the pleasure of seeing the huge Jack he had caught served up for the first dish in a most sumptuous manner. Upon our sitting down to it, he gave us a long account how he had hooked it, played with it, foiled it, and at length drew it out upon the bank, with several other particulars, that lasted all the first course. A dish of wild fowl, that



came afterward, furnished conversation for the rest of the dinner, which concluded with a late invention of Will.'s for improving the quail-pipe.

Upon withdrawing into my room after dinner, I was secretly touched with compassion toward the honest gentleman that had dined with us; and could not but consider, with a great deal of concern, how so good an heart, and such busy hands, were wholly employed in trifles; that so much humanity should be so little beneficial to others, and so much industry so little advantageous to himself. The same temper of mind, and application to affairs, might have recommended him to the public esteem, and have raised his fortune in another station of life. What good to his country, or

himself, might not a trader or merchant have done with such useful, though ordinary, qualifications?

Will. Wimble's is the case of many a younger brother of a great family, who had rather see their children starve like gentlemen, than thrive in a trade or profession that is beneath their quality. This humour fills several parts of Europe with pride and beggary. It is the happiness of a trading nation, like ours, that the younger sons, though incapable of any liberal art or profession, may be placed in such a way of life as may perhaps enable them to vie with the best of their family: accordingly, we find several citizens, that were launched into the world with narrow fortunes, rising by an honest industry to greater estates

than those of their elder brothers. It is not improbable but Will. was formerly tried at divinity, law, or physic; and that finding his genius did not lie that way, his parents gave him up at length to his own inventions. But certainly, however improper he might have been for studies of a higher nature, he was perfectly well turned for the occupations of trade and commerce.

## CHAPTER III.

### SIR ROGER AT CHURCH

I AM always very well pleased with a country Sunday; and think, if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilising of mankind. It is certain the country people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time, in which the whole village meet together with their best faces, and in their cleanliest habits, to

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

converse with one another upon indifferent subjects, hear their duties explained to them, and join together in adoration of the Supreme Being. Sunday clears away the rust of the whole week, not only as it refreshes in their minds the notions of religion, but as it puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms, and exerting all such qualities as are apt to give them a figure in the eye of the village. A country fellow distinguishes himself as much in the churchyard as a citizen does upon the Change, the whole parish politics being generally discussed in that place either after sermon or before the bell rings.

My friend Sir Roger, being a good churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his

own choosing; he has likewise given a handsome pulpit-cloth, and railed in the communion-table at his own expense. He has often told me that at his coming to his estate he found his parishioners very irregular; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a Common Prayer Book; and at the same time employed an itinerant singing-master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the psalms; upon which they now very much value themselves; and indeed outdo most of the country churches that I have ever heard.

As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

in very good order, and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and if he sees anybody else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servant to them. Several other of the old knight's particularities break out upon these occasions: sometimes he will be lengthening out a verse in the singing-psalms half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it; sometimes, when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces Amen three or four times to the same prayer; and sometimes stands up, when everybody else is upon their knees, to count the congregation, or

see if any of his tenants are missing.

I was yesterday very much surprised to hear my old friend, in the midst of the service, calling out to one John Matthews to mind what he was about, and not disturb the congregation. This John Matthews, it seems, is remarkable for being an idle fellow, and at that time was kicking his heels for his diversion. This authority of the knight, though exerted in that odd manner which accompanies him in all circumstances of life, has a very good effect upon the parish, who are not polite enough to see anything ridiculous in his behaviour ; besides that, the general good sense and worthiness of his character make his friends observe these little singularities as foils that rather



## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

set off than blemish his good qualities.

As soon as the sermon is finished, nobody presumes to stir till Sir Roger is gone out of the church. The knight walks down from his seat in the chancel between a double row of his tenants, that stand bowing to him on each side; and every now and then he inquires how such an one's wife, or mother, or son, or father do, whom he does not see at church; which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent.

The chaplain has often told me that upon a catechising-day, when Sir Roger has been pleased with a boy that answers well, he has ordered a Bible to be given him next day for his encouragement; and sometimes ac-

companies it with a fitch of bacon to his mother. Sir Roger has likewise added five pounds a year to the clerk's place; and that he may encourage the young fellows to make themselves perfect in the church-service, has promised, upon the death of the present incumbent, who is very old, to bestow it according to merit.

The fair understanding between Sir Roger and his chaplain, and their mutual concurrence in doing good, is the more remarkable, because the very next village is famous for the differences and contentions that rise between the parson and the 'squire, who live in a perpetual state of war. The parson is always at the 'squire, and the 'squire, to be revenged on the parson, never comes to church. The 'squire has

made all his tenants atheists and tithe-stealers; while the parson instructs them every Sunday in the dignity of his order, and insinuates to them, almost in every sermon, that he is a better man than his patron. In short, matters are come to such an extremity that the 'squire has not said his prayers either in public or private this half year; and that the parson threatens him, if he does not mend his manners, to pray for him in the face of the whole congregation.

Feuds of this nature, though too frequent in the country, are very fatal to the ordinary people; who are so used to be dazzled with riches that they pay as much deference to the understanding of a man of an estate, as of a man of learning; and are very

hardly brought to regard any truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several men of five hundred a year who do not believe it.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SIR ROGER AND THE WITCHES

THERE are some opinions in which a man should stand neuter, without engaging his assent to one side or the other. Such a hovering faith as this, which refuses to settle upon any determination, is absolutely necessary in a mind that is careful to avoid errors and prepossessions. When the arguments press equally on both sides in matters that are indifferent to us, the safest method is to give up ourselves to neither.

It is with this temper of mind that

I consider the subject of witchcraft. When I hear the relations that are made from all parts of the world, not only from Norway and Lapland, from the East and West Indies, but from every particular nation in Europe, I cannot forbear thinking that there is such an intercourse and commerce with evil spirits as that which we express by the name of witchcraft. But when I consider that the ignorant and credulous parts of the world abound most in these relations, and that the persons among us who are supposed to engage in such an infernal commerce are people of a weak understanding and crazed imagination, and at the same time reflect upon the many impostures and delusions of this nature that have been detected in all ages, I

endeavour to suspend my belief, till I hear more certain accounts than any which have yet come to my knowledge. In short, when I consider the question, Whether there are such persons in the world as those we call witches? my mind is divided between two opposite opinions; or, rather (to speak my thoughts freely), I believe in general that there is, and has been, such a thing as witchcraft; but at the same time can give no credit to any particular instance of it.

I am engaged in this speculation, by some occurrences that I met with yesterday, which I shall give my reader an account of at large. As I was walking with my friend Sir Roger, by the side of one of his woods, an old woman applied herself to me for my charity.

## ❧ Sir Roger de Coverley

Her dress and figure put me in mind  
of the following description in Otway :

“ In a close lane, as I pursued my journey,  
I spied a wrinkled hag, with age grown  
double,  
Picking dry sticks, and mumbling to herself.  
Her eyes with scalding rheum were galled  
and red ;  
Cold palsy shook her head : her hands  
seemed withered ;  
And on her crooked shoulders had she  
wrapped  
The tattered remnants of an old stripped  
hanging,  
Which served to keep her carcass from the  
cold,  
So there was nothing of a piece about her,  
Her lower weeds were all o’er coarsely  
patched  
With different coloured rags, black, red,  
white, yellow,  
And seemed to speak variety of wretched-  
ness.”



As I was musing on this description, and comparing it with the object before me, the knight told me that this very old woman had the reputation of a witch all over the country; that her lips were observed to be always in motion, and that there was not a switch about her house which her neighbours did not believe had carried her several hundreds of miles. If she chanced to stumble, they always found sticks or straws that lay in the figure of a cross before her. If she made any mistake at church, and cried Amen in a wrong place, they never failed to conclude that she was saying her prayers backwards. There was not a maid in the parish that would take a pin of her, though she should offer a bag of money with it. She goes by the name of Moll White,

and has made the country ring with several imaginary exploits which are palmed upon her. If the dairy-maid does not make her butter to come so soon as she would have it, Moll White is at the bottom of the churn. If a horse sweats in the stable, Moll White has been upon his back. If a hare makes an unexpected escape from the hounds, the huntsman curses Moll White. Nay (says Sir Roger), I have known the master of the pack, upon such an occasion, send one of his servants to see if Moll White had been out that morning.

This account raised my curiosity so far that I begged my friend Sir Roger to go with me into her hovel, which stood in a solitary corner under the side of the wood. Upon our first entering,

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

Sir Roger winked to me, and pointed to something that stood behind the door, which, upon looking that way, I found to be an old broom-staff. At the same time he whispered me in the ear, to take notice of a tabby cat that sat in the chimney-corner, which, as the knight told me, lay under as bad a report as Moll White herself; for, besides that Moll is said often to accompany her in the same shape, the cat is reported to have spoken twice or thrice in her life, and to have played several pranks above the capacity of an ordinary cat.

I was secretly concerned to see human nature in so much wretchedness and disgrace, but at the same time could not forbear smiling to hear Sir Roger, who is a little puzzled about the

old woman, advising her, as a justice of peace, to avoid all communication with the devil, and never to hurt any of her neighbours' cattle. We concluded our visit with a bounty, which was very acceptable.

In our return home, Sir Roger told me that old Moll had been often brought before him for making children spit pins, and giving maids the nightmare; and that the country people would be tossing her into a pond, and trying experiments with her every day, if it was not for him and his chaplain.

I have since found, upon inquiry, that Sir Roger was several times staggered with the reports that had been brought him concerning this old woman, and would frequently have

bound her over to the county sessions had not his chaplain with much ado persuaded him to the contrary.

I have been the more particular in this account, because I hear there is scarce a village in England that has not a Moll White in it. When an old woman begins to dote, and grow chargeable to a parish, she is generally turned into a witch, and fills the whole country with extravagant fancies, imaginary distempers, and terrifying dreams. In the meantime the poor wretch that is the innocent occasion of so many evils begins to be frightened at herself, and sometimes confesses secret commerces and familiarities that her imagination forms in a delirious old age. This frequently cuts off charity from the greatest objects of compassion, and

✻ Sir Roger de Coverley

inspires people with a malevolence toward those poor decrepit parts of our species in whom human nature is defaced by infirmity and dotage.

## CHAPTER V.

### SIR ROGER AT THE ASSIZES

A MAN'S first care should be to avoid the reproaches of his own heart ; his next, to escape the censures of the world : if the last interferes with the former, it ought to be entirely neglected ; but otherwise there cannot be a greater satisfaction to an honest mind than to see those approbations which it gives itself seconded by the applauses of the public : a man is more sure of his conduct, when the verdict

which he passes upon his own behaviour is thus warranted and confirmed by the opinion of all that know him.

My worthy friend Sir Roger is one of those who is not only at peace within himself, but beloved and esteemed by all about him. He receives a suitable tribute for his universal benevolence to mankind, in the returns of affection and good-will which are paid him by every one that lives within his neighbourhood. I lately met with two or three odd instances of that general respect which is shown to the good old knight. He would needs carry Will-Wimble and myself with him to the country assizes; as we were upon the road, Will. Wimble joined a couple of plain men who rid before us, and conversed with them for some time, during



which my friend Sir Roger acquainted me with their characters.

The first of them, says he, that hath a spaniel by his side, is a yeoman of about a hundred pounds a year, an honest man : he is just within the game act, and qualified to kill an hare or a pheasant : he knocks down a dinner with his gun twice or thrice a week, and by that means lives much cheaper than those who have not so good an estate as himself. He would be a good neighbour if he did not destroy so many partridges : in short, he is a very sensible man ; shoots flying ; and has been several times foreman of the petty-jury.

The other that rides with him is Tom Touchy, a fellow famous for taking the law of everybody. There

is not one in the town where he lives that he has not sued at a quarter-sessions. The rogue had once the impudence to go to law with the widow. His head is full of costs, damages, and ejectments: he plagued a couple of honest gentlemen so long for a trespass in breaking one of his hedges, till he was forced to sell the ground it enclosed to defray the charges of the prosecution. His father left him fourscore pounds a year; but he has cast and been cast so often that he is not now worth thirty. I suppose he is going upon the old business of the willow-tree.

As Sir Roger was giving me this account of Tom Touchy, Will. Wimble and his two companions stopped short till we came up to them. After hav-

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

ing paid their respects to Sir Roger, Will. told him that Mr. Touchy and he must appeal to him upon a dispute that arose between them. Will., it seems, had been giving his fellow-travellers an account of his angling one day in such a hole; when Tom Touchy, instead of hearing out his story, told him that Mr. such an one, if he pleased, might take the law of him for fishing in that part of the river. My friend Sir Roger heard them both, upon a round trot, and after having paused some time, told them, with an air of a man who would not give his judgment rashly, that much might be said on both sides. They were neither of them dissatisfied with the knight's determination, because neither of them found himself

in the wrong by it; upon which we made the best of our way to the assizes.

The court was sat before Sir Roger came, but notwithstanding all the justices had taken their places upon the bench, they made room for the old knight at the head of them; who, for his reputation in the country, took occasion to whisper in the judge's ear that he was glad his lordship had met with so much good weather in his circuit. I was listening to the proceedings of the court with much attention, and infinitely pleased with that great appearance of solemnity which so properly accompanies such a public administration of our laws; when, after about an hour's sitting, I observed, to my great surprise, in

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

the midst of a trial, that my friend Sir Roger was getting up to speak. I was in some pain for him, till I found he had acquitted himself of two or three sentences with a look of much business and great intrepidity.

Upon his first rising, the court was hushed, and a general whisper ran among the country people that Sir Roger was up. The speech he made was so little to the purpose, that I shall not trouble my readers with an account of it; and I believe was not so much designed by the knight himself to inform the court, as to give him a figure in my eye, and keep up his credit in the country.

I was highly delighted, when the court rose, to see the gentlemen of the country gathering about my old friend,

and striving who should compliment him most ; at the same time that the ordinary people gazed upon him at a distance, not a little admiring his courage, that was not afraid to speak to the judge.

In our return home we met with a very odd accident, which I cannot forbear relating, because it shows how desirous all who know Sir Roger are of giving him marks of their esteem. When we were arrived upon the verge of his estate, we stopped at a little inn to rest ourselves and our horses. The man of the house had, it seems, been formerly a servant in the knight's family, and, to do honour to his old master, had some time since, unknown to Sir Roger, put him up in a sign-post before the door ; so that The Knight's

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

Head had hung out upon the road about a week before he himself knew anything of the matter. As soon as Sir Roger was acquainted with it, finding that his servant's indiscretion proceeded wholly from affection and good-will, he only told him that he had made him too high a compliment: and when the fellow seemed to think that could hardly be, added, with a more decisive look, that it was too great an honour for any man under a duke; but told him, at the same time, that it might be altered with a very few touches, and that he himself would be at the charge of it. Accordingly they got a painter by the knight's directions to add a pair of whiskers to the face, and by a little aggravation of the features to change it into the Saracen's

Head. I should not have known this story, had not the innkeeper, upon Sir Roger's alighting, told him in my hearing that his Honour's head was brought back last night, with the alterations that he had ordered to be made in it. Upon this my friend, with his usual cheerfulness, related the particulars above-mentioned, and ordered the head to be brought into the room. I could not forbear discovering greater expressions of mirth than ordinary upon the appearance of this monstrous face, under which, notwithstanding it was made to frown and stare in the most extraordinary manner, I could still discover a distant resemblance of my old friend. Sir Roger, upon seeing me laugh, desired me to tell him truly if I thought



## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

it possible for people to know him in that disguise. I at first kept my usual silence; but upon the knight's conjuring me to tell him whether it was not still more like himself than a Saracen, I composed my countenance in the best manner I could, and replied, "That much might be said on both sides."

These several adventures, with the knight's behaviour in them, gave me as pleasant a day as ever I met with in any of my travels.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SIR ROGER AND THE GIPSIES

AS I was yesterday riding out in the fields with my friend Sir Roger, we saw at a little distance from us a troop of gipsies. Upon the first discovery of them, my friend was in some doubt whether he should not exert the justice of peace upon such a band of lawless vagrants; but not having his clerk with him, who is a necessary counsellor on these occasions, and fearing that his poultry might fare the worse for it, he let the thought drop. But at the same time gave me

a particular account of the mischiefs they do in the country, in stealing people's goods, and spoiling their servants. "If a stray piece of linen hangs upon an hedge (says Sir Roger), they are sure to have it; if a hog loses his way in the fields, it is ten to one but he becomes their prey : our geese cannot live in peace for them. If a man prosecutes them with severity, his hen-roost is sure to pay for it. They generally straggle into these parts about this time of the year; and set the heads of our servant-maids so agog for husbands, that we do not expect to have any business done as it should be, whilst they are in the country. I have an honest dairymaid who crosses their hands with a piece of silver every summer; and never fails

being promised the handsomest young fellow in the parish for her pains. Your friend the butler has been fool enough to be seduced by them ; and though he is sure to lose a knife, a fork, or a spoon, every time his fortune is told him, generally shuts himself up in the pantry with an old gipsy for about half an hour once in a twelvemonth. Sweethearts are the things they live upon, which they bestow very plentifully upon all those that apply themselves to them. You see now and then some handsome young jades among them : the sluts have very often white teeth and black eyes.”

Sir Roger observing that I listened with great attention to his account of a people who were so entirely new to

me, told me that, if I would, they should tell us our fortunes. As I was very well pleased with the knight's proposal, we rid up and communicated our hands to them. A Cassandra of the crew, after having examined my lines very diligently, told me that I loved a pretty maid in a corner, that I was a good woman's man, with some other particulars which I do not think proper to relate. My friend Sir Roger alighted from his horse, and exposing his palm to two or three that stood by him, they crumpled it into all shapes, and diligently scanned every wrinkle that could be made in it; when one of them, who was older and more sunburnt than the rest, told him that he had a widow in his line of life: upon

which the knight cried, "Go, go, you are an idle baggage;" and at the same time smiled upon me. The gipsy finding he was not displeased in his heart, told him, after a further inquiry into his hand, that his true love was constant, and that she should dream of him to-night. My old friend cried pish, and bid her go on. The gipsy told him that he was a bachelor, but would not be so long; and that he was dearer to somebody than he thought. The knight still repeated she was an idle baggage, and bid her go on. "Ah, master (says the gipsy), that roguish leer of yours makes a pretty woman's heart ache; you ha'n't that simper about the mouth for nothing." The uncouth gibberish with which all this was uttered, like the

darkness of an oracle, made us the more attentive to it. To be short, the knight left the money with her that he had crossed her hand with, and got up again on his horse.

As we were riding away, Sir Roger told me that he knew several sensible people who believed these gipsies now and then foretold very strange things ; and for half an hour together appeared more jocund than ordinary. In the height of this good humour, meeting a common beggar upon the road who was no conjurer, as he went to relieve him, he found his pocket was picked ! that being a kind of palmistry at which this race of vermin are very dexterous.

I might here entertain my reader with historical remarks on this idle, profligate people, who infest all the

countries of Europe, and live in the midst of governments in a kind of commonwealth by themselves. But, instead of entering into observations of this nature, I shall fill the remaining part of my paper with a story which is still fresh in Holland, and was printed in one of our monthly accounts about twenty years ago. “As the Trekschuyt, or Hackney-boat, which carries passengers from Leyden to Amsterdam, was putting off, a boy running along the side of the canal desired to be taken in; which the master of the boat refused, because the lad had not quite money enough to pay the usual fare. An eminent merchant being pleased with the looks of the boy, and secretly touched with compassion toward him, paid the



money for him, and ordered him to be taken on board. Upon talking with him afterward, he found that he could speak readily in three or four languages, and learned, upon further examination, that he had been stolen away when he was a child by a gipsy, and had rambled ever since with a gang of those strollers up and down several parts of Europe. It happened that the merchant, whose heart seems to have inclined towards the boy by a secret kind of instinct, had himself lost a child some years before. The parents, after a long search for him, gave him for drowned in one of the canals with which that country abounds; and the mother was so afflicted at the loss of a fine boy, who was her only son, that she died for

grief of it. Upon laying together all particulars, and examining the several moles and marks by which the mother used to describe the child when he was first missing, the boy proved to be the son of the merchant, whose heart had so unaccountably melted at the sight of him. The lad was very well pleased to find a father who was so rich, and likely to leave him a good estate: the father, on the other hand, was not a little delighted to see a son return to him, whom he had given for lost, with such a strength of constitution, sharpness of understanding, and skill in languages." Here the printed story leaves off; but if I may give credit to reports, our linguist, having received such extraordinary rudiments toward a good education, was after-

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

ward trained up in everything that becomes a gentleman; wearing off, by little and little, all the vicious habits and practices that he had been used to in the course of his peregrinations: nay, it is said that he has since been employed in foreign courts upon national business, with great reputation to himself, and honour to those who sent him, and that he has visited several countries as a public minister, in which he formerly wandered as a gipsy.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SIR ROGER IN TOWN

I WAS this morning surprised with a great knocking at the door, when my landlady's daughter came up to me and told me there was a man below desired to speak with me. Upon my asking her who it was, she told me it was a very grave elderly person, but that she did not know his name. I immediately went down to him, and found him to be the coachman of my worthy friend Sir Roger de Coverley. He told me that his master came to town last night, and would be glad to

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

take a turn with me in Grays-Inn walks. As I was wondering in myself what had brought Sir Roger to town, not having lately received any letter from him, he told me that his master was come up to get a sight of Prince Eugene, and that he desired I would immediately meet him.

I was not a little pleased with the curiosity of the old knight, though I did not much wonder at it, having heard him say more than once, in private discourse, that he looked upon Prince Eugenio (for so the knight always calls him) to be a greater man than Scanderbeg.

I was no sooner come into Grays-Inn walks, but I heard my friend upon the terrace hemming twice or thrice to himself with great vigour, for he loves

to clear his pipes in good air (to make use of his own phrase), and is not a little pleased with any one who takes notice of the strength which he still exerts in his morning hems.

I was touched with a secret joy at the sight of the good old man, who before he saw me was engaged in conversation with a beggar-man that had asked an alms of him. I could hear my friend chide him for not finding out some work; but at the same time saw him put his hand in his pocket and give him sixpence.

Our salutations were very hearty on both sides, consisting of many kind shakes of the hand, and several affectionate looks which we cast upon one another. After which the knight told me my good friend his chaplain was

very well, and much at my service, and that the Sunday before he had made a most incomparable sermon out of Doctor Barrow. "I have left," says he, "all my affairs in his hands, and being willing to lay an obligation upon him, have deposited with him thirty marks, to be distributed among his poor parishioners."

He then proceeded to acquaint me with the welfare of Will. Wimble. Upon which he put his hand into his fob, and presented me in his name with a tobacco stopper, telling me that Will. had been busy all the beginning of the winter in turning great quantities of them; and that he made a present of one to every gentleman in the country who has good principles, and smokes. He added that poor

Will. was at present under great tribulation, for that Tom Touchy had taken the law of him for cutting some hazel sticks out of one of his hedges.

Among other pieces of news which the knight brought from his country-seat, he informed me that Moll White was dead ; and that about a month after her death the wind was so very high that it blew down the end of one of his barns. “ But for my part,” says Sir Roger, “ I do not think that the old woman had any hand in it.”

He afterward fell into an account of the diversions which had passed in his house during the holidays, for Sir Roger, after the laudable custom of his ancestors, always keeps open house at Christmas. I learned from him, that he had killed eight fat hogs for this



## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

season; that he had dealt about his chimes very liberally amongst his neighbours, and that in particular he had sent a string of hog's puddings with a pack of cards to every poor family in the parish. "I have often thought," says Sir Roger, "it happens very well that Christmas should fall out in the middle of the winter. It is the most dead, uncomfortable time of the year, when the poor people would suffer very much from their poverty and cold, if they had not good cheer, warm fires, and Christmas gambols to support them. I love to rejoice their poor hearts at this season, and to see the whole village merry in my great hall. I allow a double quantity of malt to my small beer, and set it a running for twelve days to every one

that calls for it. I have always a piece of cold beef and a mince-pie upon the table, and am wonderfully pleased to see my tenants pass away a whole evening in playing their innocent tricks, and smutting one another. Our friend Will. Wimble is as merry as any of them, and shows a thousand roguish tricks upon these occasions.”

I was very much delighted with the reflection of my old friend, which carried so much goodness in it. He then launched out into the praise of the late act of Parliament for securing the Church of England, and told me, with great satisfaction, that he believed it already began to take effect; for that a rigid dissenter, who chanced to dine at his house on Christmas Day, had been observed to

eat very plentifully of his plum-porridge.

After having despatched all our country matters, Sir Roger made several inquiries concerning the club, and particularly of his old antagonist, Sir Andrew Freeport. He asked me, with a kind smile, whether Sir Andrew had not taken the advantage of his absence to vent among them some of his republican doctrines; but soon after gathering up his countenance into a more than ordinary seriousness, "Tell me truly," says he, "don't you think Sir Andrew had a hand in the pope's procession?" — but without giving me time to answer him, "Well, well," says he, "I know you are a wary man, and do not care to talk of public matters."

The knight then asked me if I had seen Prince Eugene; and made me promise to get him a stand in some convenient place, where he might have a full sight of that extraordinary man, whose presence does so much honour to the British nation. He dwelt very long on the praises of this great general, and I found that since I was with him in the country, he had drawn many observations together out of his reading in Baker's Chronicle, and other authors, who always lie in his hall window, which very much redound to the honour of this prince.

Having passed away the greatest part of the morning in hearing the knight's reflections, which were partly private and partly political, he asked me if I would smoke a pipe with

him over a dish of coffee at Squire's. As I love the old man, I take a delight in complying with everything that is agreeable to him, and accordingly waited on him to the coffee-house, where his venerable figure drew upon us the eyes of the whole room. He had no sooner seated himself at the upper end of the high table, but he called for a clean pipe, a paper of tobacco, a dish of coffee, a wax candle, and the Supplement, with such an air of cheerfulness and good humour, that all the boys in the coffee-room (who seemed to take pleasure in serving him) were at once employed on his several errands, insomuch that nobody else could come at a dish of tea till the knight had got all his conveniences about him.

CHAPTER VIII.

SIR ROGER IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

MY friend Sir Roger de Coverley told me, the other night, that he had been reading my paper upon Westminster Abbey, in which, says he, there are a great many ingenious fancies. He told me at the same time, that he observed I had promised another paper upon the tombs, and that he should be glad to go and see them with me, not having visited them since he read history. I could not at first imagine how this came into the knight's head, till I recollected that he had been very busy

all last summer upon Baker's Chronicle, which he has quoted several times in his dispute with Sir Andrew Freeport since his last coming to town. Accordingly I called upon him the next morning, that we might go together to the Abbey.

I found the knight under his butler's hands, who always shaves him. He was no sooner dressed, than he called for a glass of the widow Trueby's water, which, he told me, he always drank before he went abroad. He recommended to me a dram of it at the same time, with so much heartiness that I could not forbear drinking it. As soon as I had got it down, I found it very unpalatable; upon which the knight, observing that I had made several wry faces, told me that he knew I should

not like it at first, but that it was the best thing in the world against the stone or gravel.

I could have wished, indeed, that he had acquainted me with the virtues of it sooner; but it was too late to complain, and I knew what he had done was out of good-will. Sir Roger told me, further, that he looked upon it to be very good for a man, whilst he stayed in town, to keep off infection, and that he got together a quantity of it upon the first news of the sickness being at Dantzic; when of a sudden, turning short to one of his servants, who stood behind him, he bid him call a hackney-coach, and take care it was an elderly man that drove it.

He then resumed his discourse upon



Mrs. Trueby's water, telling me that the widow Trueby was one who did more good than all the doctors and apothecaries in the county: that she distilled every poppy that grew within five miles of her, that she distributed her water gratis among all sorts of people; to which the knight added that she had a very great jointure, and that the whole country would fain have it a match between him and her; "and truly," says Sir Roger, "if I had not been engaged, perhaps I could not have done better."

His discourse was broken off by his man's telling him he had called a coach. Upon our going to it, after having cast his eye upon the wheels, he asked the coachman if his axletree was good; upon the fellow's telling him he would

warrant it, the knight turned to me, told me he looked like an honest man, and went in without further ceremony.

We had not gone far, when Sir Roger, popping out his head, called the coachman down from his box, and, upon his presenting himself at the window, asked him if he smoked; as I was considering what this would end in, he bid him stop by the way at any good tobacconist's and take in a roll of their best Virginia. Nothing material happened in the remaining part of our journey, till we were set down at the west end of the Abbey.

As we went up the body of the church, the knight pointed at the trophies upon one of the new monuments, and cried out, "A brave man, I warrant him!" Passing afterward

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

by Sir Cloudsly Shovel, he flung his hand that way, and cried, "Sir Cloudsly Shovel! a very gallant man!" As we stood before Busby's tomb, the knight uttered himself again, after the same manner, "Doctor Busby, a great man! he whipped my grandfather; a very great man! I should have gone to him myself, if I had not been a blockhead; a very great man!"

We were immediately conducted into the little chapel on the right hand. Sir Roger, planting himself at our historian's elbow, was very attentive to everything he said, particularly to the account he gave us of the lord who had cut off the King of Morocco's head. Among several other figures, he was very well pleased to see the statesman Cecil upon his knees; and, concluding

them all to be great men, was conducted to the figure which represents that martyr to good housewifery, who died by the prick of a needle. Upon our interpreter's telling us that she was a maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth, the knight was very inquisitive into her name and family ; and after having regarded her finger for some time, "I wonder (says he), that Sir Richard Baker has said nothing of her in his Chronicle."

We were then conveyed to the two coronation chairs, where my old friend, after having heard that the stone underneath the most ancient of them, which was brought from Scotland, was called Jacob's Pillow, sat himself down in the chair ; and, looking like the figure of an old Gothic king, asked our interpreter

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

what authority they had to say that Jacob had ever been in Scotland? The fellow, instead of returning him an answer, told him that he hoped his Honour would pay his forfeit. I could observe Sir Roger a little ruffled upon being thus trepanned; but our guide not insisting upon his demand, the knight soon recovered his good humour, and whispered in my ear that if Will. Wimble were with us, and saw those two chairs, it would go hard but he would get a tobacco-stopper out of one or tother of them.

Sir Roger, in the next place, laid his hand upon Edward the Third's sword, and, leaning upon the pummel of it, gave us the whole history of the Black Prince; concluding that, in Sir Richard Baker's opinion, Edward the Third was

one of the greatest princes that ever sat upon the English throne.

We were then shown Edward the Confessor's tomb; upon which Sir Roger acquainted us that he was the first that touched for the Evil; and afterward Henry the Fourth's, upon which he shook his head, and told us there was fine reading of the casualties of that reign.

Our conductor then pointed to that monument where there is the figure of one of our English kings without a head; and upon giving us to know that the head, which was of beaten silver, had been stolen away several years since: "Some Whig, I'll warrant you, (says Sir Roger); you ought to lock up your kings better; they will carry off the body, too, if you do not take care."

The glorious names of Henry the Fifth and Queen Elizabeth gave the knight great opportunities of shining, and of doing justice to Sir Richard Baker, who, as our knight observed with some surprise, had a great many kings in him, whose monuments he had not seen in the Abbey.

For my own part, I could not but be pleased to see the knight show such an honest passion for the glory of his country, and such a respectful gratitude to the memory of its princes.

I must not omit that the benevolence of my good old friend, which flows out toward every one he converses with, made him very kind to our interpreter, whom he looked upon as an extraordinary man; for which reason he shook him by the hand at parting,

telling him that he should be very glad to see him at his lodgings in Norfolk-buildings, and talk over these matters with him more at leisure.



## CHAPTER IX.

### SIR ROGER AT THE PLAY

MY friend Sir Roger de Coverley, when we last met together at the club, told me that he had a great mind to see the new tragedy with me, assuring me at the same time, that he had not been at a play these twenty years. The last I saw, said Sir Roger, was the Committee, which I should not have gone to neither, had not I been told beforehand that it was a good Church of England comedy. He then proceeded to inquire of me who this Distressed Mother was ; and upon hearing

that she was Hector's widow, he told me that her husband was a brave man, and that when he was a schoolboy he had read his life at the end of the dictionary. My friend asked me, in the next place, if there would not be some danger in coming home late, in case the Mohocks should be abroad. "I assure you (says he), I thought I had fallen into their hands last night; for I observed two or three lusty black men that followed me half-way up Fleet Street, and mended their pace behind me, in proportion as I put on to go away from them. You must know (continued the knight, with a smile), I fancied they had a mind to hunt me: for I remember an honest gentleman in my neighbourhood, who was served such a trick in King Charles

the Second's time ; for which reason he has not ventured himself in town ever since. I might have shown them very good sport, had this been their design ; for as I am an old fox-hunter, I should have turned and dodged, and have played them a thousand tricks they had never seen in their lives before." Sir Roger added that if these gentlemen had any such intention, they did not succeed very well in it ; "for I threw them out (says he) at the end of Norfolk Street, where I doubled the corner, and got shelter in my lodgings before they could imagine what was become of me. However (says the knight), if Captain Sentry will make one with us to-morrow night, and if you will both of you call on me about four o'clock, that we may be at the house before it

is full, I will have my own coach in readiness to attend you, for John tells me he has got the fore-wheels mended."

The captain, who did not fail to meet me there at the appointed hour, bid Sir Roger fear nothing, for that he had put on the same sword which he had made use of at the battle of Steenkirk. Sir Roger's servants, and among the rest my old friend the butler, had, I found, provided themselves with good oaken plants, to attend their master upon this occasion. When we had placed him in his coach, with myself at his left hand, the captain before him, and his butler at the head of his footmen in the rear, we convoyed him in safety to the playhouse; where, after having marched up the entry in good order, the captain and I went in with

him, and seated him betwixt us in the pit. As soon as the house was full, and the candles lighted, my old friend stood up and looked about him with that pleasure which a mind seasoned with humanity naturally feels in itself, at the sight of a multitude of people who seemed pleased with one another, and partake of the same common entertainment. I could not but fancy to myself, as the old man stood up in the middle of the pit, that he made a very proper centre to a tragic audience. Upon the entering of Pyrrhus, the knight told me that he did not believe the King of France himself had a better strut. I was, indeed, very attentive to my old friend's remarks, because I looked upon them as a piece of natural criticism, and was well

pleased to hear him, at the conclusion of almost every scene, telling me that he could not imagine how the play would end. One while he appeared much concerned about Andromache; and a little while after as much for Hermione: and was extremely puzzled to think what would become of Pyrrhus.

When Sir Roger saw Andromache's obstinate refusal to her lover's importunities, he whispered me in the ear that he was sure she would never have him; to which he added, with a more than ordinary vehemence, you cannot imagine, sir, what it is to have to do with a widow. Upon Pyrrhus, his threatening afterward to leave her, the knight shook his head and muttered to himself, Ay, do, if you can. This

part dwelt so much upon my friend's imagination that at the close of the third act, as I was thinking of something else, he whispered in my ear, "These widows, sir, are the most perverse creatures in the world. But pray (says he), you that are a critic, is this play according to your dramatic rules, as you call them? Should your people in tragedy always talk to be understood? Why, there is not a single sentence in this play that I do not know the meaning of."

The fourth act very luckily began before I had time to give the old gentleman an answer; "Well (says the knight, sitting down with great satisfaction), I suppose we are now to see Hector's ghost." He then renewed his attention, and, from time

to time, fell a-praising the widow. He made, indeed, a little mistake as to one of her pages, whom, at his first entering, he took for Astyanax; but he quickly set himself right in that particular, though, at the same time, he owned he should have been very glad to have seen the little boy, "who," says he, "must needs be a very fine child, by the account that is given of him." Upon Hermione's going off with a menace to Pyrrhus, the audience gave a loud clap; to which Sir Roger added, "On my word, a notable young baggage!"

As there was a very remarkable silence and stillness in the audience during the whole action, it was natural for them to take the opportunity of the intervals between the acts to express



their opinion of the players, and of their respective parts. Sir Roger, hearing a cluster of them praise Orestes, struck in with them, and told them that he thought his friend Pylades was a very sensible man; as they were afterward applauding Pyrrhus, Sir Roger put in, a second time, "And let me tell you (says he), though he speaks but little, I like the old fellow in whiskers as well as any of them." Captain Sentry, seeing two or three wags, who sat near us, lean with an attentive ear toward Sir Roger, and fearing lest they should smoke the knight, plucked him by the elbow, and whispered something in his ear that lasted till the opening of the fifth act. The knight was wonderfully attentive to the account which Orestes gives of

Pyrrhus, his death, and at the conclusion of it told me it was such a bloody piece of work, that he was glad it was not done upon the stage. Seeing, afterward, Orestes in his raving fit, he grew more than ordinary serious, and took occasion to moralise (in his way) upon an evil conscience, adding that “Orestes, in his madness, looked as if he saw something.”

As we were the first that came into the house, so we were the last that went out of it; being resolved to have a clear passage for our old friend, whom we did not care to venture among the justling of the crowd. Sir Roger went out fully satisfied with his entertainment, and we guarded him to his lodgings in the same manner that we brought him to the playhouse; being

## Sir Roger de Coverley ❧

highly pleased, for my own part, not only with the performance of the excellent piece which had been presented, but with the satisfaction which it had given to the good old man.

## CHAPTER X.

### SIR ROGER AT VAUXHALL

AS I was sitting in my chamber, and thinking on a subject for my next Spectator, I heard two or three irregular bounces at my landlady's door, and upon the opening of it, a loud cheerful voice inquiring whether the philosopher was at home. The child who went to the door answered, very innocently, that he did not lodge there. I immediately recollected that it was my good friend Sir Roger's voice : and that I had promised to go with him on the water to Spring Garden, in case it

proved a good evening. The knight put me in mind of my promise from the staircase, but told me that if I was speculating, he would stay below till I had done. Upon my coming down, I found all the children of the family got about my old friend, and my landlady herself, who is a notable prating gossip, engaged in a conference with him; being mightily pleased with his stroking her little boy upon the head, and bidding him be a good child, and mind his book.

We were no sooner come to the Temple stairs, but we were surrounded with a crowd of watermen, offering their respective services. Sir Roger, after having looked about him very attentively, spied one with a wooden leg, and immediately gave him orders

to get his boat ready. As we were walking toward it, "You must know (says Sir Roger), I never make use of anybody to row me that has not either lost a leg or an arm. I would rather bate him a few strokes of his oar, than not employ an honest man that has been wounded in the Queen's service. If I was a lord or a bishop, and kept a barge, I would not put a fellow in my livery that had not a wooden leg."

My old friend, after having seated himself, and trimmed the boat with his coachman, who, being a very sober man, always serves for ballast on these occasions, we made the best of our way for Fox-hall. Sir Roger obliged the waterman to give us the history of his right leg, and hearing that he had left it at La Hogue, with many

particulars which passed in that glorious action, the knight in the triumph of his heart made several reflections on the greatness of the British nation; as, that one Englishman could beat three Frenchmen; that we could never be in danger of popery so long as we took care of our fleet; that the Thames was the noblest river in Europe; that London bridge was a greater piece of work than any other of the seven wonders of the world; with many other honest prejudices which naturally cleave to the heart of a true Englishman.

After some short pause, the old knight, turning about his head twice or thrice to take a survey of this great metropolis, bid me observe how thick the city was set with churches, and

that there was scarce a single steeple on this side Temple Bar. “A most heathenish sight! (says Sir Roger): There is no religion at this end of the town. The fifty new churches will very much mend the prospect; but church work is slow, church work is slow!”

I do not remember I have anywhere mentioned in Sir Roger’s character his custom of saluting everybody that passes by him with a good morrow or a good night. This the old man does out of the overflowings of humanity, though at the same time it renders him so popular among all his country neighbours, that it is thought to have gone a good way in making him once or twice knight of the shire. He cannot forbear this exercise of benevolence



even in town, when he meets with any one in his morning or evening walk. It broke from him to several boats that passed by us upon the water ; but to the knight's great surprise, as he gave the good night to two or three young fellows a little before our landing, one of them, instead of returning the civility, asked us what queer old put we had in the boat, and whether he was not ashamed to go a-wenching at his years ? with a great deal of the like Thames ribaldry. Sir Roger seemed a little shocked at first, but at length assuming a face of magistracy, told us, "that if he were a Middlesex justice, he would make such vagrants know that her Majesty's subjects were no more to be abused by water than by land."

We were now arrived at Spring Garden, which is exquisitely pleasant at this time of year. When I considered the fragrancy of the walks and bowers, with the choirs of birds that sung upon the trees, and the loose tribe of people that walked under their shades, I could not but look upon the place as a kind of Mahometan paradise. Sir Roger told me it put him in mind of a little coppice by his house in the country, which his chaplain used to call an aviary of nightingales. “You must understand (says the knight), there is nothing in the world that pleases a man in love so much as your nightingale. Ah, Mr. Spectator! the many moonlight nights that I have walked by myself, and thought on the widow by the music of the nightingale!” He

here fetched a deep sigh, and was falling into a fit of musing, when a mask, who came behind him, gave him a gentle tap upon the shoulder, and asked him if he would drink a bottle of mead with her? But the knight, being startled at so unexpected a familiarity, and displeased to be interrupted in his thoughts of the widow, told her, "She was a wanton baggage," and bid her go about her business.

We concluded our walk with a glass of Burton ale, and a slice of hung beef. When we had done eating ourselves, the knight called a waiter to him, and bid him carry the remainder to a waterman that had but one leg. I perceived the fellow stared upon him at the oddness of the message, and was going to be saucy, upon which I rati-

fied the knight's commands with a peremptory look.

As we were going out of the garden, my old friend, thinking himself obliged, as a member of the Quorum, to animadvert upon the morals of the place, told the mistress of the house, who sat at the bar, "that he should be a better customer to her garden, if there were more nightingales and fewer strumpets."

THE END.







SEP 6 1900





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 157 167 9

